

VOLUME ONE ~ NUMBER 2

wake 88.5 fm

MAGAZINE



INTERVIEWS WITH
LEE RONALDO OF
SONIC YOUTH,
MICACHU AND
THE DUTCHESS & THE DUKE,
PITCHFORK COVERAGE,
ALBUM REVIEWS,
VERDI'S ERNANI & MORE!

Roast In Peace

MC09

[illegible]

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
MIDNIGHT			SPECIALTY Chicagobites	ROCK Mo'na	ROCK AMERICAN DREAM alternating with Unibitchy Party	3- RAP Buddy French alternating with Industry Showcase and live mixing by Hudson Davis	12:30 PM
1:00 AM	ROCK House of Bored	ROCK Ballety alternating with Otha Ariatus	ROCK CASHAS ANTI-CHIST			3- RAP P Chilli and live mixing by Chicago DJs	1:30 AM
1:30 AM				ROCK Phil alternating with John S.	ROCK The Space of Life		2:00 AM
2:00 AM	Apally Breaking Cauldron alternating with Psychodrama Etc.	ROCK Nite Crash alternating with Uppers+Downer	ROCK Bornstick in the Morning			3- RAP Industry Showcase and live mixing by Hudson Davis	2:30 AM
3:00 AM							3:30 AM
3:30 AM							4:00 AM
4:00 AM							4:30 AM
4:30 AM	ROCK D-Funked C-Train	ROCK Skranz 4 V Lf	ROCK Pet Rock	ROCK Richard	ROCK A Spot A Love	3- RAP Industry Showcase and live mixing by Hudson Davis	5:00 AM
5:00 AM							5:30 AM
5:30 AM							6:00 AM
6:00 AM							6:30 AM
6:30 AM	ROCK Made Record Go NOW!	ROCK Stochastic Pizza Upbeat Bicycle	ROCK Mourly	ROCK Mike P. alternating with Matt V	ROCK re-Blood alternating with The 1000	JAZZ Jazz for the Comme'seur alternating with The Velvet Hours	6:50 AM
7:00 AM							7:30 AM
7:30 AM							8:00 AM
8:00 AM		ROCK Kitch alternating with Teengenerate Lobotomy	ROCK Intellectonica	ROCK Brad G	ROCK Underground Groove	JAZZ Jazz for the Comme'seur alternating with The Velvet Hours	8:30 AM
8:30 AM	ROCK Supra						9:00 AM
9:00 AM							9:30 AM
9:30 AM							10:00 AM
10:00 AM							10:30 AM
10:30 AM	ROCK Yacht de 10 a 12	ROCK MOON MOON MOON	ROCK Rock	ROCK Mike O' - Radio Zero	ROCK From the Dark End of the Street	JAZZ Jazz for the Comme'seur alternating with The Velvet Hours	11:00 AM
11:00 AM							11:30 AM
11:30 AM							NOON
NOON							12:30 PM
12:30 PM	CLASSICAL No Hitchhike to Dust	CLASSICAL From the Camps to the Stars...	CLASSICAL High Class alternating with Radio Free Kimberly	PUBLIC AFFAIRS Shawna Uncommon Views on Everyday Issues alternating with The A.L.L. Sports Hour	ROCK The Space 101 in the Streets	JAZZ Jazz for the Comme'seur alternating with The Velvet Hours	1:00 PM
1:00 PM							1:30 PM
1:30 PM							2:00 PM
2:00 PM	CLASSICAL Chicago Iessura	CLASSICAL Shift From My Collection	CLASSICAL Classics and Fury	(2:00 PM) PUBIC AFFAIRS Views from the Service Entrance	INTERNATIONAL Alto Lique alternating with Rastaman Live	JAZZ Jazz for the Comme'seur alternating with The Velvet Hours	2:30 PM
2:30 PM							3:00 PM
3:00 PM	PUBLIC AFFAIRS In Judgement, Comments on Law & Culture tomorrow with Alex Beniston	PUBLIC AFFAIRS The Art Museum alternating with Chicago	PUBLIC AFFAIRS The Grit Science Show		INTERNATIONAL Calypso Carcade	JAZZ Jazz for the Comme'seur alternating with The Velvet Hours	3:30 PM
3:30 PM	Stonepaper Report						4:00 PM
4:00 PM							4:30 PM
4:30 PM	FOLK Slight Return	INTERNATIONAL Voces de la Cancion Mexicana	FOLK Keep it simple	INTERNATIONAL El Tomado Tropical	INTERNATIONAL Gateway to Brazil	JAZZ Jazz for the Comme'seur alternating with The Velvet Hours	5:00 PM
5:00 PM							5:30 PM
5:30 PM	FOLK A Feast of the Folk	INTERNATIONAL Cool Runnings	FOLK Folklore Society Show	INTERNATIONAL Musics Around the World	INTERNATIONAL Rendezvous Afrika	JAZZ Jazz for the Comme'seur alternating with The Velvet Hours	6:00 PM
6:00 PM							6:30 PM
6:30 PM							7:00 PM
7:00 PM	JAZZ Zounds of Jazz	JAZZ Jazz in Flight alternating with Jazz Port	JAZZ Blues Week's Jazz alternating with Jazz	JAZZ Jazz alternating with The Jazz Supreme Show	SPECIALTY Friday Focus Show	JAZZ Jazz for the Comme'seur alternating with The Velvet Hours	7:30 PM
7:30 PM							8:00 PM
8:00 PM							8:30 PM
8:30 PM							9:00 PM
9:00 PM							9:30 PM
9:30 PM							10:00 PM
10:00 PM							10:30 PM
10:30 PM	SPECIALTY The Fox Show	SPECIALTY Radio Dada	RAP CRA Radio	SPECIALTY The Quaker Party	RAP Pure Type	SPECIALTY The Blues Discussion	11:00 PM
11:00 PM							11:30 PM
11:30 PM							MONDAY



88.5 fm chicago

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

WHPK is the University of Chicago's 100-watt community radio station, which, for the past 50 years, has provided its listeners with a wide array of unique musical styles.

WHPK is comprised of university students and community members who continuously share their knowledge of different genres, including rock, classical, folk, jazz, international, and rap. We also have specialty shows that focus on avant-garde styles, blues, dance music, and live studio performances. Aside from music, there is a public affairs format—a forum to express community concerns and to hear interviews with politicians and other community leaders. As a whole, WHPK is committed to airing programs that are not typically heard on the mainstream, and now that we're streaming live at whpk.org, we're able to reach an even wider audience.

WHPK magazine is entirely written, edited, and compiled by WHPK members. It offers its readers a collection of articles, show descriptions, concert reviews, interviews, and album reviews written by station members who strive to bring you the latest in music news.

If you're intrigued by what you read, as we hope you will, you can tune in at any time of the day to 88.5 FM or, if you're outside of our broadcasting range, you can listen online at whpk.org, where you'll also find a current show schedule.



88.5 fm chicago

WHPK MAGAZINE ~ VOL 1, #2

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IF YOU'D LIKE TO PLACE AN AD in the WHPK magazine, contact Moira Smith at sponsorship@whpk.org

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"PARTY FROM DAMASCUS" & WHPK'S YOUNGEST DJ

A charmed WHPK listener writes:

Kudos to WHPK for airing the "Party from Damascus," with Erika the Sultan's Favorite. I guess it's no accident that Erika, with her sultry voice, would be the Sultan's Favorite. I love listening to the show, Erika's first class choice of contemporary Middle Eastern music, events and guests is always entertaining. It's a party on the air! She also sometimes sneaks in some Tango music, or Bhanga from India - you never know what you'll hear or learn.

Erika has traveled all over the Middle East, and used to work as a professional belly dancer in the restaurants of Chicago. She brings the region to you through music, culture comments and events around the Chicago metro area. A few of her past guests have been an Iraqi film director, belly dancers, a guy who rode his bike from Chicago to South America and Syrian musicians.

And by the way, hats off to her sometimes sidekick, "DJ Amichar" who is this mystery kid with the seasoned social skills, witty quips, great music commentary and superb reader of public service announcements? Whoever he is and wherever he came from, BRAVO and bring him out!

All told, I adore this show. Party from Damascus ROCKS!

Listen to WHPK 88.5 FM Thursdays from 6-7 PM CST to "Party from Damascus". A variety of contemporary Arab music, Chicago music events and guests. Pop music from Lebanon, radio hits from Egypt, traditional music from Syria, Khaleefi from the Gulf, tracks sharhki bellydance music - sounds of real life, music from every Middle Eastern country. Some shows feature the "Bhangra Bonus" - with Bhanga from India. Bring the party to your house, everyone's invited, no passport necessary. Erika, the Sultan's Favorite is your belly dancing hostess, shimmy along! ■

Micachu and The Shapes hail from London's Gildhall School of Music and Drama,

and they brought their experimental pop to the US stage this summer. Their live show is just as exciting as their freshman release, **JEWELLERY**, on Rough Trade Records, with Mica Levi on guitar and vocals, Raissa Khan on keyboards and Marc Pell on drums. Micachu not only gets the "experimental" portion of the equation spot on — using vacuum cleaners, broken bottles, kickass sampling techniques, and homemade instruments such as The Chiu, a modified guitar with a percussive element — but they make "pop" that is as danceable as it is musically and lyrically intriguing.

I chatted with them about touring while in school, Justin Timberlake, and South Africa after their show at Schubas in July — the first of the tour. **READ JJS REVIEW ON PG. 14**

KAC: Is this for a university? You love your radio stations out here.

Crist: (laughs) We do.

K: I suppose it's because there's so many students. If they were to do that for like, Gildhall it would be a bit pointless wouldn't it?

KICA: There's not a big radio station culture at the unies [in London].

C: What is there in lieu of college radio?

K: (laughs) Not shit, writing a full paper a week...

KI: Drinking, and like, you know... drugs, I guess.

C: So what's it like to be in school and in a touring band at the same time?

K: Yeah, it's pretty hard work to be honest. These two are deferred. But I'm submitting in August. Raissa's going back in... Mica doesn't know.

KI: I quit.

K: You quit?

KI: Yeah, I quit. Don't go to school. (laughs) No, I quit cause the [music composition] course I'm doing, I really don't need to be that young to be doing it anyway. A lot of people who are on the course are quite old.

For me the point of the course is not really getting the qualifications, it's the time to do the research and spend time working, so I'd rather have a full amount of time to do that.

C: And you guys have a really good thing going with the band, so why not keep going with it?

KI: Cheers!

C: How did you guys meet?

K: We were all at uni together. Uh yeah, then we were living together... me and Raissa started in the same course

KI: (laughs) Raissa's like "We're weird"

K: Well you lived in halls. I didn't live in halls.

KI: Your face is like, "Am I just gonna let him lie?" (laughs)

C: Mica, you started playing music when you were 4. Do you remember those times?

KI: Well, my family are musicians, and I apparently was adamant about playing the violin, and I don't think I was really writing much, just bashing keys. Dunno. Uh (laughs) Yeah it was probably a horrible, horrible sound. I was quite deaf when I was young, so I had to be taught all that. I was like, "bleeehhhh." Sounded like a total idiot. Well, no no, I don't mean that... people have speech impediments...

K: So basically people with speech impediments are idiots? (laughs)

KI: No, No, they're not! I never... I never said that at all! No no!

K: Cause that's pretty much what you said. **KI:** (laughs) I was really hard of hearing, and I couldn't speak properly and I had to be

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interview

The Dutchess and the Duke (that's just how they spell it, yoi!) are Kimberly Morrison and Jesse Lortz of Seattle. The duo have punk rock roots, but their first album *She's the Dutchess*, He's the Duke on Hardly Art is a more rustic presentation. **The band's beautifully raw "campfire punk" is born out of years of hard hits, breakdowns, and reconciliation.** I talked with Kim, Jesse, and one of their drummers, Matt Williams, about the inspiration for their sophomore release after their performance at The Pitchfork Music Festival in July.

Crist: Somebody was asking if anyone wanted acid during your show.

JJSSE: Acid?

C: Yeah

J: We were all eating acid.

C: You guys have a new record coming out, *Sunset/Sunrise*. What was the process like for that record?

J: Well, Hardly Art asked us to do a second record, and we had, like, three songs, and we said, "Yeah we'll do it." We booked Greg Ashley's studio, Creamery in Oakland. I wrote at least half of the songs while we were recording it. I would literally give Kim the lyrics and be like, "here you go" and then she would just nail it or not nail it. We went and recorded them in about ten days.

Then it took us four months to mix the shit. (laughs) But the studio that we made the first record in was this dude's basement, so we tried to keep it kind of bare bones. When we knew we were gonna record with Greg...

KIMBERLY: The sounds that he gets out of that place are just amazing and if you ever listen to any of the stuff he does, you'd be blown away by the intensity in the sound. **J:** So we knew what we were getting into, as far as what our limitations were, which were basically nothing so it was like, "Well, what do we wanna do? Do we wanna have strings on this? Sure. You wanna have organ? You wanna have 4 guitar tracks?"

K: Belts?

J: Bell, yeah. It was just like...

K: Whatever you want, you know?

J: Anything was possible so it was really kind of exciting.

C: "She's the Dutchess, He's the Duke" ends on relatively happy note with *Armageddon* song...

K: We had to put something happy in there. 'Cause the rest of it was kind of dour at times. But I would say that this new record is definitely more hopeful. And it's really pretty and we're proud of it.

J: I just had a baby... or I didn't. Me and my wife just had a baby.

C: Congratulations!

J: Yeah, 6 weeks today.

K: He's so beautiful.

J: I'm finally starting to lose the baby weight. (laughs)

C: What's the baby's name?

J: Oscar. Oscar Walter Lortz.

K: His initials are O.W.L.

J: We named him after our friend in San Francisco, Oscar Miguel. He plays bass for us when we're on the west coast.

C: Does he know this?

J: Oh yes. He had a nightmare that we had a girl. So I was like, "Well, maybe we could name her Oscarella." And I asked my wife and she was like, "No way Jose..."

Oscarina.

(laughter)

J: So a lot of the songs were a little reflective on the new stage of life that we're in. I'm in.

C: You've said that the new record was written for the studio. What was *She's the Dutchess*. He's the Duke written for?

K: We just made a 7" on a whim and didn't think anything would really come of it. And then Hardly Art asked us to do a record and we were, like, equally excited and suspicious at the same time.

C: Suspicious of what?

K: Because who would want to put out a record of us? LOOK AT US!

KATT: Garage rock, and kind of playing to nobody.

J: And putting out 500 runs. Playing in punk bands and stuff.

K: It's always a surprise when someone has a good deal.

C: So this was the first campfire punk record you did?

J: I think it's the first campfire punk record

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interview

By Dugan Hayes
Stochastic Pizza Upload Boyce, Tuesday's 6-8pm

AN INTERVIEW WITH SONIC YOUTH'S RENALDO

VOLUME ONE NUMBER 2 WHPK MAGAZINE

It's been seven years since Sonic Youth released *Murray Street*, an album that was adored equally by their noise fans, their rock fans, and their noise-rock fans. But their last three studio albums, including their latest *The Eternal*, have been polarizing to say the least. While some have praised the band for reclaiming the alternative rock sound of their early 90s work, plenty of others have accused them of abandoning their experimental tendencies in favor of a more mainstream approach. But it really doesn't make any sense to accuse a band as diverse and prolific as Sonic Youth of going too far in any particular direction. In fact, it's pretty much impossible when they sandwich a self-released live record like *Andre Sider Af Sonic Youth*—probably their harshest, most chaotic effort yet—between *Rather Ripped* and *The Eternal*. I met up with Sonic Youth guitarist/vocalist Lee Renaldo backstage before a show to talk about some of their older experimental releases, their approaches to live improvisation and composition, multimed projects and collaborations, and what to records to expect in the future.

WHPK: Did you ever give anything to Geffen that they didn't want to release because it was too weird?

LR: I don't think we ever gave them anything that they refused to put out. Am I forgetting some particular incident? I don't really have a good memory of it. Our relationship with them was pretty good, and we knew what kind of things they wouldn't know how to work with. There must have been something we gave them that was a little peculiar, but it's slipping my mind right now. They proposed some stuff to us, like they had—I'm not even

supposed to talk about this because nobody's ever supposed to hear these mixes—but they had this rap producer do some remixes of a song off *Dirt* or off *Go*, and they were the most awful, embarrassing mixes ever. We still have them, we haven't burned the tapes, but we've definitely suppressed them.

WHPK: Did they want to use them as B-sides?

LR: No, as like a remix single. That was the era, that was what people were doing back then. But in general they didn't have a problem with anything. That's kind of why we started *STR*, as a place for putting stuff we knew Geffen wasn't going to deal with. It was that and the fact that after *Lolapalooza* we bought all this serious studio gear.

That was the start of our real studio, and suddenly we were recording stuff in really high quality. We've always recorded stuff when we were just messing around, just extrapolating or improvising and not trying to write songs, and all of a sudden that stuff sounded so great that we thought we would start releasing some of it. And then

we started creating a couple pieces in the studio that we knew we weren't really going to play live or add lyrics, like "Phagant" off the first *STR* record. It was definitely an outgrowth of having a better studio, and having all this Sonic Youth material around made us think we shouldn't be limited to one song/album every year and a half or two years when we obviously go out and do other stuff, both as the group and separately.

WHPK: You released *Silver Session* before you had *STR*. How did that come about?

LR: We were asked if we would do some sort of charity record for the San Francisco Suicide Prevention hotline and dedicate it to this kid Jason Knuth who killed himself and was a big Sonic Youth fan. We actually had this music around that we didn't know what to do with, so we cut it up and made the *Silver Sessions* record out of it. The music itself—maybe it says it in the record, I'm not sure—but we had these awful neighbors upstairs that would play country-western or classic rock or whatever it was, and we just wanted to get them out of there. So we turned up all the amps and leaped the guitars against the amps and just filled the room underneath these guys so full of sound to the point where everything was feeding back. It was like a constant steady state in there, but if you walked across the room your body would physically be changing the waves and you'd hear shifts in sound in the room, like sending ripples through the force, that kind of thing.

WHPK: So how much of that record is just walking around?

LR: There's no playing at all. There's no touching of instruments on that one. The studio lends itself to experimentation like that, and it especially did back then since we were spending tons and tons of time there.

WHPK: What kind of releases can we look forward to seeing soon from SYR?

LR: We've got planned a couple volumes of film soundtrack material, and maybe at some point a live series, like whole gigs from different periods—an '83 live gig, a '93 live gig, something like that. That's what we're working toward at this point.



WHPK: When you play noise or experimental shows these days they tend to be one-offs...

LR: Yeah, they tend to be specialized things, like this one we just did with Merce Cunningham for his 90th birthday celebration in New York. It was all abstract music that we kind of made verbal scores for, eight or ten pieces that were certain set lengths, so they were kind of in line with the *Goodbye 20th Century* methodology. That was a one-off that was four nights long, but usually that kind of stuff is more unique, like the *Other Sides* show with Mats and Masami.

WHPK: When you released *Goodbye 20th Century* you went on tour playing pieces from that record. Do you plan on another experimental tour in the future?

LR: Well, I don't know. It's likely at some point

I would imagine. But something exactly like that, again, who knows? We made that record in the studio over two or three weeks, or maybe not even that long. We got all those people in there—we flew Willie Winant out and Jim was in New York at the time—and did it all in this one period of time. And the tour for that record was only 30 days long with 12 shows or something, and that was it. We did one show in New York and a month of shows in Europe playing in concert halls and that sort of thing, and we never really did any more than that.

WHPK: Obviously you have a lot of experience playing graphical scores and indeterminate pieces written by other composers. Have you composed something along those lines for someone else to play?

LR: I've done a bunch of graphical scores since that period that have been played by a few different ensembles here and in Europe. I just wrote a piece for the New York new music group Bang on a Can and Thurston had also written a piece for them. I've written pieces for this group in Europe called Zeibakater, the ones who did Lou Reed's *Metal Machine Music*. And I've got a couple others like that floating around. I have one for twelve musicians called *All Work and No Play* that someone in Spain just performed, and it's been performed by another group in Holland. There's a couple things like that, just a completely abstract color score kinda thing. So it happens every once in a while. Any little doodle can turn into a score if you need a score at that moment.

continued on next page...

WHPK: When you do collaborative performances, how often do you usually practice with the other performers beforehand?

LR: It all depends. Sometimes none! Sometimes the first time you're meeting someone you're on stage with them, and sometimes it's people you've done a lot of stuff with, both in rehearsal rooms and in live situations.

Someone like Michael Morley from the Dead C whom we've done a lot of collaborations with—we've done a fair amount of playing in both settings. And Mats from the Other Sides record, we've done a lot of stuff with him. But often times you'll hear a recording of a first meeting. I played with Hans Bennink like that. I'd never played with him before and we did a duet in New York. He'd seen me play and I'd seen him play, and we just did it. It's kind of fun because it's like flying by the seat of your pants—you never know what's going to happen. And those are really the times that the improvisers are separated from the non-improvisers, because when you're doing that kind of playing the idea is to be open and responsive to what's going on in that very moment and not just bringing your established vocabulary and cycling through the different things you do. So they can be very challenging situations. I recently played a show in New York with this Chicagoan Rob Lowe who goes by the name LeChens. We'd never played together before, but we kind of knew each other a bit and had seen each other play, so we just decided to book a gig as a duo—just the two of us in this room with projections—and it was great. It was really fun.

WHPK: I have a vague idea of what was going on during the performance of Hidros 3, but can you tell me more about that experience?

LR: It was in an art gallery in this little town in the south of Sweden where we were doing a two-week residency with a company of people. Sonic Youth was a core part of it, but Mats was involved along with a number of other players. O'Rourke was involved before he was officially a member of the group. Or

maybe he was, maybe we were doing Ghosts and Flowers right then. There were also a couple dancers, and some of us were doing visual art while we were there. There were just so many things going on. But every night a different person would lead the company in a concept that was completely made up on that day. Two nights Sonic Youth played more traditional concerts in a theater, and the other nights were in this art space or in a museum. Some nights were variety shows where everyone played a solo and some nights were group compositions. The night I led was a group score for the ensemble with different people playing duets with films going by my wife Leah. And Mats made this composition where he had a score for each person, and the idea was that everyone was going to be in different rooms so we would all be in eye contact with each other but couldn't hear what everyone else was doing. There was one main room and all these smaller rooms of it, and the audience could just wander around wherever they wanted. So I was the only one in my room, and I was looking at the clock and looking at my score and at certain points I'd be playing, kind of hearing a little bit of what was coming out of the other rooms. And it the main room, O'Rourke was taking all the signals and pulling them into a mixing desk and reducing it to a stereo transcription that was playing in there. Some people were just staying in there, listening to it as a live broadcast, and other people were walking around the museum and going in different rooms. It was a really fun piece to do. Each of us only experienced the room that we were in, really.

WHPK: Do you think it was harder to play that way?

LR: No, it wasn't hard at all. It was super fun, super easy. Super open and easy. It was just like, "Start playing here, stop playing here, here are some parameters of quietness or loudness or whatever." It was really easy. That kind of music is really easy to play. And that piece in particular was very experimental. I can't really imagine listening to it.

[Thurston comes in the room.]
LR: Here's a question, Thurston. Did we ever

give Geffen something they refused to put on because it was too weird?

TR: No.

LR: No, it didn't happen. Was there something we wanted to put out that Paul refused to release?

TR: Um, Master=DK.

LR: Oh, right, Master=DK! But that was pre-Geffen.

[Thurston leaves.]

WHPK: You've always had fantastic opening bands playing with you. Do you usually have control over that?

LR: Totally. We've had control of that since the mid 80s when we started doing our own shows. We were asking Sacharine Trust or Firehose or whoever to open for us. And then Laughing Hyenas and Die Kreuzen after that, and then Nirvana and Mudhoney after that. And for a while in the mid to later 90s we got into having weird improvisors open for us. Sure, that's a super important thing to us, to bring the community along.

WHPK: So there's no pressure from Matador these days to tour with someone from the label?

LR: No. There's more pressure from Eastside Peace to tour with their artists! Did you hear about our art show?

WHPK: No, where is it?

LR: It's in Sweden at the moment. It's a show called Sensational Fix. For the last three or four years we've been organizing this art show with a curator who's traveling around museums in Europe. It's been in France and Italy and Germany and Sweden, and now it's in Spain. We're still hoping it's going to come to the U.S. It's this huge, sprawling art show of stuff we did and stuff we did with collaborators like Mike Kelley, Raymond Pettibon, and Tony Oursler, people who have done album covers and things like that for us, and like a hundred other artists. It's really a cool show. And we put out this giant catalog with some 7-inch records in it. The first printing was so small it sold out almost immediately, so I don't even

THE DUTCHES & THE DUNK from page 3

ever... except for Donnan, maybe.

K: We've always been around music and have tried to play it a lot of times in our own crappy ways.

C: So in 2009 Kim is the dutchess, and Jesse is the duke. Who were you in 1995?

J: 14 years ago? I was living on the streets, breaking into houses, dealing meth, in jail and...

K: Les.

J: No, they're all true. I was on like a meth compound in Vancouver. I was a mess. I was a mess.

K: Totally not who he is now. I mean it's like, such an evolution. He's become such a better person.

J: Obviously I'm not a meth addict anymore... unfortunately for my waistline.

K: At 30 years old, he's seen a lot more of life than a lot of people have and he's experienced a lot of hardship and I think it clearly comes out in the songwriting.

C: It definitely does.

K: Because he took hits.

J: Well and, like, the thing is too, is that I used to just write punk songs that were, like, good punk songs.

K: 3 chords.

J: 3 chords, like pop punk songs, I guess. And then I kind of had a breakdown and all this stuff started bubbling up and it was like, "uh, I'll write about it."

C: Kim, where were you 14 years ago?

K: 14 years ago? I was living with my dad and being kind of a stoner mess... Listening to Nirvana.

J: Everybody listened to Nirvana 15 years ago. Some of us still listen to Nirvana.

C: Can I get personal and ask about lyrics from the last record?

J: Sure.

C: In Reservoir Park you're asking somebody to tell you what to do...

Tell me! What am I gonna do?

J: It's kind of a rhetorical question, I guess. **K:** Isn't it always? WHAT AM I GONNA DO?

C: [laughs] I wish I could get the intensity of that onto paper.

J: I'm not religious or anything like that. It's not, you know, a religious thing. But, it's kind of like...

C: Making the ocean?

J: Yeah.

C: Do you guys have a big tour planned for this next record?

J: We have some stuff in the mix. Yeah, you'll hear about it.

C: Secrets.

K: We're not ever gonna do, like, a huge world tour or anything cause Jesse just had a baby so we're gonna do one week, two week stints so that he can be there for Oscar.

J: Yeah, until he's big enough to sell merch for us.

K: Or be on stage

J: Or roll cigarettes for me. ■

THE SEALS continued from page 2

coached out of that.

C: When did you start making instruments?

K: We never made an instrument, that was mainly Mike's thing. Mike got me to put some things on a plank of wood and mount them.

RAIS: Technically, sampling is making an instrument 'cause you're sampling a sound and spreading it and manipulating the sound to make it what you want it to be.

MI: A couple of years ago for me. Just fiddling a round. On the neeeeeeee mix tape there is a new mixtape called Kwesaku-chu - and on it Ralpa and I do mixes and we have a sample that we always use which is a sample of The Chu. DONNNNNING

C: So you guys have a picture of Justin Timberlake up on your myspace page. Are you fans?

R: YES!
MI: He's such a good dancer. Did you say friends with or fans of Cause yeah, we're friends too [laughs].

K: He's a natural born performer really, as much as like although they're not in the

same league but like, as much as Michael Jackson was. Cause apparently the record label wanted to release another record with Michael Jackson, but he didn't want to do it. R: So that's the album that Justin Timberlake did.

MI: He's a great dancer.

C: You guys do some dancing in the golden phone video...

MI: [laughs] Oh yeah, much like Justin.

C: Can we expect more dancing in the next Micacatu video?

R: [laughs] Do you really want it?

C: I kinda do, yeah!

MI: [laughs] Even if people wanted this, I don't think it's a good idea.

C: So what are your favorite summer jams this year?

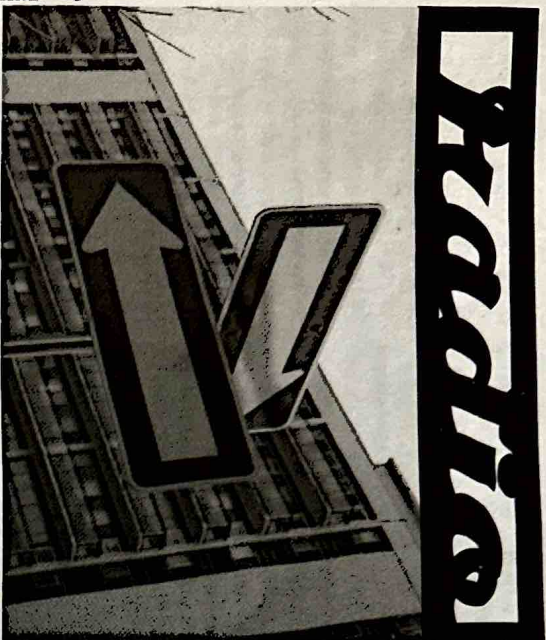
MI: Oh fucking... Omar Souleyman! Basically anything that he's done, his whole record. It's bananas.

C: How did the show in South Africa come about?

MI: That was just me. It was sort of a project, not really a show. I went out there on a conomy with White Ribbon Alliance, which is a charity that promotes healthy maternity around the world. We just visited some places and played music with people and it was a really unusual experience, kind of a massive culture shock. Not because of poverty, but mainly because of racism. It has not been that long and there is a really huge racial divide and that was really strange.

C: Were people into the music?

MI: Uh, no I don't think so. It was a massive lesson for me. I don't know how much people gained from us going out there, but for me I learned a lot because it kind of showed me that music isn't just about indulging in yourself and your art, you know. It's just about being human. A lot of how people do music out where we visited was about dancing, singing, kind of like socializing. It's just kind of what you do, it's how you grow up, it's like, really natural. It was much less self-conscious than the area of music... you can get wrapped up in here, and so it was really refreshing. ■



WHY MEN WON'T

Interview with Dr. Richard Francis - Author, *Why Men Won't Ask for Directions: The Seductions of Sociobiology*

From the *Groks Science Show* on WHPK 88.5FM, hosted by Dr. Charles Lee

The success of the evolutionary theory to explain the adaptation of organisms by selection remains a cornerstone of modern biology. This approach has been so successful that it has even been extended to explain the selective advantage of many behaviors. This field of sociobiology has experienced enormous growth during the past few decades, but it may be inquiry with limitations.

Discussing these issues of sociobiology is Dr. Richard Francis. Dr. Francis received his Ph.D. in Neurobiology and Behavior from Stony Brook University, and was a recipient of the National Science Research Award from NIH. He was a postdoctoral fellow at both Stanford and U.C. Berkeley. And, he is the author of the book, *Why Men Won't Ask for Directions: The Seductions of Sociobiology*.

Charles Lee (CL) talked with Dr. Richard

RF: Well, one of the more topical ones recently concerns rape. There's been a book by Randy Thornhill and Palmer, which proposes an adaptive explanation of rape in humans and which is not very compelling. Basically, their explanation is that rape is an adaptive strategy for people of low socio-economic backgrounds who can't find mates in the more traditional ways. The data for it is weak. It's basically what Gould has referred to as a just-so story, but it's one with potentially adverse consequences. I don't think evolutionary biology has much to contribute to this issue. I think it's more an issue for the social sciences, and I just think that a little humility is appropriate here from evolutionary biologists.

CL: You talk a lot in your book about these types of theories related to sex. In particular, why are there sexes at all? RF: I do have a chapter on why we have

Francis (RF) about his book *Why Men Won't Ask for Directions: The Seductions of Sociobiology*

CL: What is sociobiology?

RF: Sociobiology is an attempt to extend the evolutionary approach developed by Darwin to social behaviors in animals and humans, which is fine. Unfortunately, they have a very narrow conception of what an evolutionary explanation is. In particular, they focus almost exclusively on natural selection, so they are often referred to as adaptationists. So, much of this book is a critique of adaptationism in general, and sociobiology and evolutionary psychology in particular.

CL: So, it's trying to extend evolutionary theory to psychology and behavior?

RF: Yes, which is fine, as long as it's not done in a simplistic and distorted way, which is what I think sociobiology does.

CL: Perhaps you can give a few examples of the types of questions that sociobiology has been trying to address that may not necessarily be within its domain.

sexual reproduction as opposed to asexual reproduction. And, there I explore the adaptationist's explanation for why there is so much sex when there are good evolutionary reasons why you wouldn't expect it. In particular, you wouldn't expect so much sex among vertebrates, where it is almost ubiquitous. This is a case where I introduce the "how" biology to understand the distribution of sexual behavior. Basically, there are constraints on vertebrates, such that even if it were adaptive to go back to an asexual mode of reproduction, it's impossible to get there.

CL: So, once we've traveled down the road, there's no turning back.

RF: Yes.

CL: A lot of the book is a critique between the "why" and "how" approaches to biology. Would you elaborate on that?

RF: Yes, that's important. Ernst Mayr who is a very famous evolutionary biologist, developed this dichotomy between what he called "how" biology and "why" biology.

"Why" biology was the purview of evolutionary biologists. "How" biology was everything else: genetics, development, physiology, etc. And then, he developed this two-tiered approach to biological explanation. "How" biology supplied the proximate explanation, whereas "Why" biology supplied the ultimate explanation, a term which is problematic in and of itself. He also asserted that you could do the "Why" biology without any of the "How" biology considerations. I think that is what has become problematic in a lot of sociobiology. If they had a better "how" biology grounding, they would be more tethered than they are now.

CL: Searching for explanations without looking for a mechanism?

RF: Right. It's a mechanismless search. In fact, it's basically a teleological approach, which ironically they inherited from creationists like William Paley and natural theology in

general.

CL: Why are these types of questions and approaches so seductive?

RF: Well, we're all born natural teleologists. We want to explain nature in some way analogous to the actions of an agent that is analogous to ourselves. It also has great heuristic value in certain settings. The problem is that it has this mudzakhke property, referring to that southeastern scourge that takes over everything. So, it takes over your mental landscape to the point where you can't consider alternative perspectives. As a heuristic, teleology is fine, but when it becomes taken as a literalist approach, it becomes problematic.

CL: So, in current biology, we've replaced a "good" explanation with a "nature" explanation.

RF: Exactly. Daniel Dennett is a case and point. He's basically replaced a "designing god" with a "designing mother nature". But, it's done over time. I like to call it "designed on the installment plan". This intuition is com-

mon to both Dennett and Paley that nature reflects some designed process. And, that's what I reject.

CL: What do you think are some of the more egregious examples of this in sociobiology?

RF: One of the chapters I devote with special reference to evolutionary psychology is the alleged sex difference in spatial cognition. And actually, that's sort of what the title refers to. Let me give you their explanation first. It goes back to some Pleistocene conditions in which men were out hunting and women were at home gathering. Men because they ranged farther had to develop some innate Euclidean sense and navigational skills, which the women didn't require. And then, evolutionary psychologists have added a new twist. The better navigators were also sexually more attractive to their mates. So, in essence, to ask for directions is like taking off your shirt to reveal

a surken chest. It would turn off the females. The problems with this beyond its sort of surface silliness are three. One is most basically the data are not very good at showing robust sex differences in spatial cognition between males and females. Throughout history there has been a number of tests. In fact, every test of spatial cognition that has been devised has initially shown a sex difference. And, every one of those results has eventually been debunked, with one exception, and that is the most recent test, which is three-dimensional mental rotation. So even if we accept that there is a sex difference in three-dimensional mental rotations, then there is the problem of what is its cause. Evolutionary psychologists assume that it's biological, that there are hormones involved, that testosterone somehow makes men better spatial navigators. But, the evidence for that is extremely weak. In fact, I spent much of the time writing this book having to read that kind of literature. Whereas there's ample evidence that sociocultural factors play an enormous role in this. And

also this spatial cognition story extends to sex differences in mathematics. For example, the sex differences are most pronounced in the United States, even in the Western world. In some cross-cultural studies, they've shown that African-Americans and Hispanics that females are superior in mathematics, and in Asian-Americans it has been found that the sex difference is quite small. And, then there's evidence that these sex differences are disappearing over time, which you would expect given the new educational opportunities available to females. And, this does not accord well with a biological explanation, much less an evolutionary explanation.

Finally, just from the purely evolutionary explanation, it makes no adaptive sense. Because if in fact males were selected for this extra spatial cognition and females weren't, we would still expect both their male and female children to have this enhanced cognition, unless there is a disadvantage for enhanced

spatial cognition in females, which there is no reason to believe there is. So, traits in which there are selective advantages to one sex and not the other are called sexually antagonistic. So, evolutionary psychologists have to prove that spatial cognition is a sexually antagonistic trait. A good example of a sexually antagonistic trait is a penis. It's good for a male to have, not good for a female. Now, nipples, on the other hand, are not a sexually antagonistic trait. So, a selection for nipples in females has resulted in a correlated response in males. I suggest that the same would be the case with spatial cognition.

CL: There's no real reason for women to not have this spatial sense.

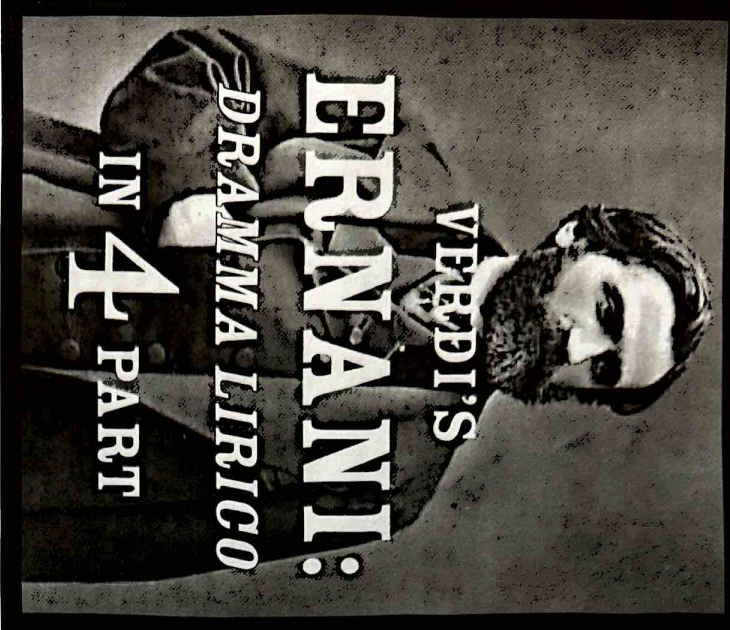
RF: No. What's the down side?

CL: How then should biologists be approaching these types of questions?

RF: Well, when it comes to social behaviors in humans, like I indicated before, they should approach it with some humility. And, right now, evolutionary psychology is very

ask for directions

Classical



Italian composer Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901). Photograph by unknown, 1847. Unknown ca. 1850

CHICAGO TESSITURA: MUSIC AND MUSINGS FROM THE OPERA CANON Your Host: Stacey Staskus

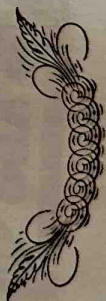
Success rides on every note of Verdi's fifth opera. It was written after the extraordinary success of *Nabuccodonosor* (*Nabucco*) in 1842 and of 1843's *Lombard alla prima crociata*—both which premiered in Milan. Verdi was in demand and on a roll. His exuberance and creative energy propel this irrational story through applause and bravos through opera house corridors of the time to 2009, and soon

this opera. Even more compelling might be the spell cast by glorious Verdi melodies designed for four extraordinary voices and ensembles of great beauty. Such vocal demands often affect the decision to mount the opera until a time when 'Verdi Voices' are available and ready for the demanding music. One must have a secure top to the vocal range and mastery of vocal technique for leaps and legatos and a voice capable of singing for three or more hours. Verdi also paid attention to the quality of the voices and their ability to blend into the combined sound he wanted when he selected his singers. It was not unusual for him to exploit a particular vocal quality by giving a singer the 'perfect' number (*aria*, *rondo*, etc.) to drive the drama or define the role.

The opening prelude starts with the energetic sounds of a master composer honing his skill and alerting us to the rousing drama to come. Although short, the prelude contains musical intervals representing two major dramatic strands. Early on, the solo trumpet and trombone play a melody that we later hear when Ernani swears to a solemn oath of life and death. This represents the dominant strand: that of the Code of Honor with its thirst for violence and revolution. The softer ascending and lyrical melody in the prelude represents the lasting love of Ernani and Elvira heard later in interludes of love and transformation: the second dramatic strand. Act I opens with the vocal gusto and flamboyance of the title character, Ernani. After the death of his father at the hand of the King Don Carlo, his sworn enemy, Ernani becomes a bandit. He is an adventurous bandit, handsome, impulsive and attractively adolescent. The movement around a steady melodic line in his opening *brindisi* (drinking song) indicates his restlessness. The rousing lyrics and rhythm encourage his followers to join him in his plan to rescue his beloved captive by storming the residence of Ruy Gomez de Silva, a Spanish aristocrat. Silva can no longer resist the charms of his ward Elvira and uses political force to arrange to

marry her. She, however, returns Ernani's love and is repulsed at being forced to marry her elderly guardian, Silva. Ernani and his fellow bandits will take his beloved for his own, by golly, by invading the castle in true swashbuckling style.

This passionate beginning is only made more dramatic by plot twists and turns that leave many an opera lover wondering what will happen next. Within the cavernous sets on stage, we sense the power of royal excess in the towering castle rooms, deep dark tombs, and in people draped in luxurious garments and well appointed armor. The 16th century Spanish display of wealth is everywhere and includes surprises of people popping out of hiding places in the exquisite paneling of aristocratic residences. Ernani spends time in such a hiding place in a couple of acts. In Act I, he suddenly springs from the paneling in Elvira's (cozy) boudoir as she is being forcefully abducted by Don Carlo, whose lust must prevent her marriage to Silva so that he can take her for himself. Later, in the second act at Silva's castle, it's back to the paneling as Silva hides him to prevent his capture by the King who has followed him to the castle. The tightly contrived drama flows forward relentlessly with the passion put to music as only Verdi can. The most frequently noted solos include Elvira's arias in Act I, scene II where she decries her forthcoming marriage to Silva and sings out to Ernani to carry her away from all this. The demands for a high floating legato and technical control make this a challenge for even the most experienced of Verdi sopranos ('Ernani... [Ernani inviolabile]'). The ensemble portions show Verdi's new skill—and skill to come—as the vocal lines of the major singers smoothly blend into duets and trios. Verdi develops his ensemble form using fewer formal and predictable stanzas with repetitions and reworking the predictable *cabaletta* for a scene's finale. The one flaw of compositional style that catches my ear is the orchestral 'compa-pa' accompaniment that in Verdi's later works totally disappears, leaving only the



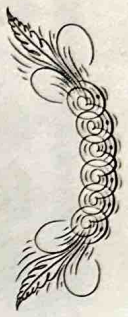
beauty of the singing voice with a supporting or quiet orchestra. The major innovation in this work is noted in the reduced use of the chorus and the increased attention to the relationships of the leading characters. One outstanding example finds the blending and contrasting vocal lines of baritone Don Carlo and soprano Elvira (Act I, Scene II 'Da quel di che l'ho veduto') followed by the one of many great bass arias (Silva), 'Inferno E tu crederai'. The scene ends in the expected format of a blend of statements from all the major characters, who we have come to know from their solos, joined by the chorus. All the voices rise to a crescendo as the curtain falls. We then have before us a sketch of the emotions and conflicts that will be resolved in the following acts that are skillfully put into place by a formidable dramatist. Another major vocal event and the most indicative of what is to come of the more mature Verdi occurs in the tightly worked Act III, in the tomb of Charlemagne in Aachen-Chapelle. Don Carlo avails the announcement of the selection of the new Holy Roman Emperor, hoping it will be himself. He muses on his life and the effect the role of Emperor will have on him ('O de' verd'anni miei'). There is a subtle and beautiful transformation in his character during this aria that is reflective and sublime. It is so telling and uplifting that it brings hope for a less violent outcome of the conflicts set in motion early in the drama from a now more compassionate ruler.

It is in Act II, however, that the most outrageous demand on our belief in the plot takes place. Silva grants asylum to Ernani, who is disguised as a pilgrim, and saves his life when Don Carlo follows him to Silva's castle. Refusing to engage in a duel, Ernani offers Silva his hunting horn and boastfully swears that he will give up his life at any later time whenever he sounds it. They swear to the agreement and join forces against the king. The reference to a sworn oath and the workings of a code of honor

is pivotal to the unfolding of this drama and is relentlessly acted out by Silva who is controlled by his obsession for vengeance. Ironically, his honor compels him to grant asylum in his castle to Ernani, who is disguised as a pilgrim and fleeing capture by the king. Later, in the most despicable of claims based on the code, he demands the life he previously spared, thereby gaining revenge for the loss of his intended bride, Elvira. The dramatic punch of this demand for Ernani's life occurs at the blissful moment when all is rosy following his marriage to Elvira. The sound of his hunting horn is heard, then repeated, and Ernani takes his dagger and yields to the code... Yes, this really happens, he takes his life just as he promised; it's the Code.

As you well may see, the plot is convoluted, and many more details will be left for you to discover on your own. However, it seems important to conclude with some observations on the workings of what was called the Code of Honor—similar to The Code of Chivalry, The Brotherhood or The Black Hand (Mafia). Vestiges of this basic societal glue remain today in such social behaviors as keeping one's word, a host's good manners, one's integrity, loyal friendship and of course, in gang dynamics. Insults can involve bloodshed in some instances, yet today there seems to be a preference for law suits to gain revenge or vindication. In the past, such codes were known and sanctioned, particularly in regard to property and women. In addition to the final and cruelest one mentioned above, several instances of the workings of the Code of Honor are evident in this work. A strong element of falsehood and duplicity seems to be embedded in this construct, which we see when the King allows Ernani to escape in Act II, a muffled aside statement, Ernani, in the closing quartet, affirms his intention to continue to extract revenge from Don Carlo for the death of his father while seeming to be grateful for the release he is granted. He must follow the Code. Silva also duplicitously bows in allegiance to the

continued on next page...



King in Act I and later refuses to release Ernani to him. Both events occur because the predominant emotion is revenge. It takes precedence over lesser promises. So Silva, keeping his honor as a host, can deny the King's demand and refuse to release Ernani. Yet, he reserves his right to extract revenge from Ernani over insults suffered on the occasions when he found Ernani and his intended bride, Elvira, embracing, and then worst of all, when he lost her entirely in the end. He sets the denouement aside for later to savor like dessert after dinner. The code for Elvira is hardly clear and seems to be entirely missing in this society. She is treated according to rules of what might be called chivalry or courtesy to a lady of aristocratic social rank. Elvira is made an object or pawn in the conflicts of the three men who claim to want her. They matter-of-factly attempt to steal her away, marry her by force, or hold her hostage in what may be the shabbiest treatment suffered by any woeful operatic heroine. She does have some personal power beyond these heavy in order to attract three strong, disparate male characters: a scoundrel bandit, a nobleman and a king. Opera heroines often face hardships or pine away after their lost loves, but Elvira has 3 suitors, a truly rare operatic event—truly a rare operatic event. However, adding wealth and aristocratic station to her assets should give her rights or a code of her own, it seems to me. It would certainly serve to prevent the victimization she endures as a pawn or object. But that role makes her the catalyst in much of the dramatic action, so she needs to be kept powerless and timid. Verdi does not make her a totally passive prima donna, however, because we find her forcefully asserting herself in Act I. In the second scene, the king and his men arrive to abduct her from her boudoir. Elvira resists in the melodious baritone-soprano duet mentioned above. She then grabs his dagger in an attempt to defend herself. This ends very badly for her. The action precipitates a dramatic crisis where we find Ernani popping out of the wall for his

attempted rescue. Then follows an agitated duet-turned-trio then turned quartet following the arrival of Silva enraged over the goings-on in the boudoir of his bride to be. Silva then sings a gorgeous bass aria (In felice tu credvi) in which he cries out at the betrayal of his intended bride who turns his heart to ice with her obvious infidelity assumed from the presence of two men in her boudoir. We can think that the obvious effect on Elvira might be one of humiliation, as she is bearded and called a betrayer or worse in front of all the characters on stage and the audience as well. Yet this is opera and we suspend that train of thought to realize that this behavior has less to say about the character of Elvira than the need of a startlingly strong climax to the first act. In a parting shot, one can bet she will think twice before flashing a dagger again. There is a strong, loving side to her nature which is expressed in the final scene in the form of self sacrifice. Following Ernani's death at the sound of the hunting horn, a distraught Elvira, suddenly torn from the joy and bliss of her long awaited wedding day, takes her own life while Silva gloats, his honor preserved yet again. But where is the code for Elvira? Or, more pointedly, where is Elvira? We are missing a flesh and blood heroine in this work. In its production this year, Lyric Opera does not even allow Elvira to take her own life. In the synopsis of the opera in the Season Companion, produced annually by Lyric Opera's Education Department, she is prevented from taking her life by Silva and Don Carlo and she falls unconscious on Ernani's lifeless body.

The original ending to the work, Hugo's Hernani, used by Verdi and his librettist, Francisco Maria Plave, caused a sensation during its staging in Paris in 1830 during fierce debate regarding the change in the literary world from classical rules to romanticism. Victor Hugo's famous drama features a king, a noble, and a bandit in love with the same woman in a setting of conspiracy and political upheaval. It opened on February 25, 1830 to huge outcries from the audience. The main objection lay in the growing trend toward romanticism that found true believers of classicism hiring claqueurs to boo, hiss, and disrupt performances in an effort to drive the play off the stage for good. The work persisted, however, and it is likely that the reaction to this play influenced Verdi's choice for his first work to premiere at La Fenice in Venice. The audience there was highly critical at this time, and he sought a startlingly dramatic work that would appeal to them. He drew up the outline for the action in the plot and, in what will become his customary method of composition, suggested the poetry for the music as well. The novice librettist Plave worked and reworked the verse to Verdi's liking. Victor Hugo strongly protested the liberties taken with his work at its Paris production and demanded changes. Verdi complied and called this version, *Il Proscritto* and changed the characters from the Spanish of the original Hernani, on *l'honneur Castilian* to Italian. The popularity of Hugo's play encouraged many versions, but none seem to be performed today. In his working of the play, Verdi preserved the dramatic line but cut out the less important cast members and details. The original ending found Ernani, and then Elvira, poisoning themselves as they die in a loving embrace. In the face of such self sacrifice and devotion following hours of emotional upheaval, the cruel ending or twist of fate is shocking to most who experience this drama for the first time. Despite the magnanimity and generosity of the newly crowned Roman Emperor, who blesses the union of the lovers, pardons the rebels, and brings to the stage a celebratory final scene, the cruel Silva claims his right to the life of Ernani and sounds the horn. The power of the Code prevails. We will meet a similar character again, even more evil and destructive, Iago in Verdi's *Otello*. ■

Reviews

SO COW, SO COW



The modifier "super" is applicable to the music of freshman Brian Kelly. *AA4 So Cow* in many ways . . . super stummy, super-fuzzy, super-swift, super-catchy, super-fucking awesome! Kelly combines several thoroughly 80s influences . . . beat happening, the replacements *Kim-Pop*, and a host more . . . but never comes off as a throwback act, indeed he sounds very of the now and actually mostly calls to mind fellow one-man-band *Nobunny*, albeit less affected and higher fidelity . . . this LP collects tracks from *So Cow*'s various LP's, EP and seven inches released over the last three years and polished up by some fine Chicago folks just for you . . . absolutely killer! **PLAY THIS NOW**, and thank me later . . . - *jj* 04.23.09

SUNSET RUBDOWN, DRAGONSLAYER



As I have disclosed many times in the past, I am an unrepentant Spencer Krug fanboy; I think he possesses a combined musical/lyrical prowess unrivaled in modern day indie-don, and that talent is in full display on *Dragonslayer* . . . this record matches the ambitious songcraft of *Random Sport* *Lower* but ditches its convoluted studio sonic for the leaner approach of *Shut Up I Am Dreaming*, but this is no mere retread. Krug embraces a host of new elements, from fuzzy polyrhythms (7) to reggae (as filtered by The Clash) (6) to driving, straight-ahead two guitar rock that almost totally forgoes the keys as either melodic or rhythmic devices (2) . . . and yet *Dragonslayer* is unmistakably a Spencer Krug record, once more revisiting familiar lyrical concepts in new contexts . . . the only issue I have is that aside from *Swan Lake* redux to 5, every song on here is about 6 min. long or more; they all merit their runtime, but it makes listening a commitment (not to mention devoting 6+ min. of your show), but it's so, so worth it!

RECOMMENDED TRACKS: I Feel Evil, The Grip, Ecstatic Song - *jj* 03.05.09

PLASTIC CRIMEWAVE SOUND, PAINTED SHADOWS



Another set of quality heavy-psych from our friends Plastic Crimewave Sound, basically the same line-up as the *Ecstasy 12"* from last year plus a woin on the last track . . . but where that record, specialized in laser hot face melters. *Painted Shadows* opts for the slow burn, circular grooves and single riffs repeated over and over again, some achieving meat-and-rinduced trance, some pulsing and pulling like water spiraling down a drain, all of it rife with tension . . . not my favorite PCWS release, but still a good'un, the 20 min. album closer is a fuckin' monster.

WAT Y LOS ARRRGHSH!!!



Spanish garage rock band that boasts one of the most fun names we come across in quite a while (say it out loud, and don't forget to tell your r's!) . . . Wat y Los Arrghsh!!! play fairly by-the-books garage rock with a heavy emphasis on the organ, but the main

attraction is frontman Juanito Wau, who sounds like he swallows swords wrapped in sandpaper and spews out his lyrics with fearless vigor... fun stuff, definitely worth a spin if you're into this sort of music...

RECOMMENDED TRACKS: It's Greta, Help Me Find Myself, Viva Link Wray!!! - *il*, 04.23.09

VEE DEE. PUBLIC MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM



Epic double-LP length destroyer from Chicago's kings of psychpunk, the mighty Vee Dee Public Mental Health System finds the boys nimbly spanning breakneck garage riffage and utterly face melting heaviness with more skill than ever, and the record is an almost perfect balance of 3 1/2 minute rockers and 6+ minute jammers... blast the fuck out of this!

RECOMMENDED TRACKS: City in Heat, Teens O.D.

THE INTELLIGENCE. THE MODERN IDIOM

So how does one follow up one of the best, most complete LP's to come out of the whole blown-out rock garage punk scene (2007's 'Deuteronomy'?) By blowing the whole fuckin' genre to smithereens and pissing with goodnatured glee all over the remains... the intelligence has taken their shit to a whole new level with 'Take surfers,' cacophonous but comprehensible digging deep into 50s and 60s garage traditions while forging a new sound from familiar contexts but ever taking themselves so seri-

ously that they wouldn't title a son 'Fuck Eat Skill.' BELIEVE IT, kids, this is where it's at!

RECOMMENDED TRACKS: Dept & E.S.P., Warm Transfers, Pony People, Singles Barge - *il*, 06.26.09



MICACHU, JEWELLERY

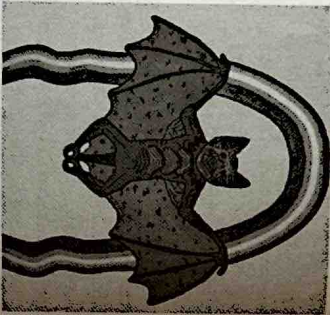


The French/American composer Edgard Varese said that eh sought 'for the bomb that would make the musical world explode and thereby let in all sounds, sounds which up to now—and even today—have been called noises...' Micachu (AKA Micachu). Her band The Shapes and producer Matthew Herbert are all classically trained and are doubtless familiar with Varese's quest, and on Jewellery they become that bomb, exploding the conventions of the pop song by fashioning their tunes out of junkyard instruments, out-of-tune guitar, atonal synth loops and all manner of found sounds and clattery racket... and yet the songs are incredibly catchy for the most part anyways... part of the credit must go to Herbert who has made a habit of turning the nonmusical into music, most famously on 'Bodily Functions,'

though he also did for big band jazz what Micachu does for pop on 2008's There's Me & There's You'... this is not to give short shrift to Levi, as it's her songs that give the album life and her lyrics are wonderful, simultaneously vivid and obscured, intimate and open to interpretation... the shapes share songwriting credit on the tracks they perform, which also tend to be the album's best, most memorable tunes... now I have my issues with this record at times, on occasion Levi uses a half speak/half spit delivery common to UK emcees (which I dislike), and some tracks get too bogged down in murky, rhythmic abstraction, but on the whole this is one of th most interesting, unique exciting, and best best records of 2009 so far.

RECOMMENDED TRACKS: Lips, Just In Case, Calculator - *il*, 04.23.09

THEE OH SEES, HELP



Goddamn Thee Oh Sees just keep getting better and better... Help manages to incorporate Dwyer's penchant for screwy noise and mind-fuck psych while still being the most tuneful and accessible Oh Sees release to date, thanks to fastpumping 60s style guitar riffs and up-front, surprisingly decipherable vox belting deliciously soda-pop melodies... and though the lyrics tend towards the dada, there's instances of surreal profundity throughout (ex: when love is in a hole/everybody fall in)... ass-kicking at the nth level!

RECOMMENDED TRACKS: Enemy Destruct, Ruby Go Home, Rainbow, Go Meet the Seed - *il*, 05.07.09

CAUSE CO-MOTION, BECAUSE BECAUSE EP



YES! Six sweet slices of shamble-pop from WHPK's newest pals, Cause Co-Motion! The band continues to refine their signature sound, sounding both tighter and more prone to spontaneously implode at the same time... I can't get enough of this band's killer combination of style, atmosphere, sneaky hooks, and they just keep getting better and better! P.S. 'Dan the Fan' totally flipped for these at Summer Breeze!

RECOMMENDED TRACKS: Is What You Say What You Mean?, Leave It All - *il*, 05.28.09

GRIZZLY BEAR, VECKATIMEST



So I've been trying to pin down exactly what about this record bugs me for about a week... at first I thought it might be the disappearance of the worn, otherworldly ambience that characterized Yellow House, but I got over that after a few spins... then I thought maybe it was transcribing Nico 'Tie's so hot right now' Mulh for string & choir arranging, but to be honest Mulh's arrangements are tastefully restrained and add great depth to the songs on which they appear (unlike Daniel Rossen's ghastly arrangements on

track 11)...then it hit me, these beautifully elaborate intricately constructed chamber-opop numbers support songs that really aren't there, lyrical fluff and rhyming exercises which barely scratch the surface of substance... but it is very pretty, as the first two tracks are fuckin' boss as hell, so if content ain't a hang up for ya you'll probably enjoy this.

RECOMMENDED TRACKS: Southern Point, Two Weeks, While You Wait for the Others



Cause Co-Motion performing at WHPK's 2009 Summer Breeze. Photo Courtesy of Edward Mendez



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SONIC YOUTH from page 10

think it went into bookstores here. It's been really low-level news over here, but it's something we've worked on a lot over the last three or four years, organizing this thing and finally getting it off the ground, but it's pretty cool.

WHPK: Well speaking of album covers, how did it work out getting the John Fahey painting for *The Eternal*?

L.B.: We already owned it. Thurston owned that one, but between us we have a lot of his work. When we were getting to know him toward the end of his life we were trading

paintings and buying paintings from him, and there's some of that stuff in the art show too, including that piece. And we just chose it in a five-minute session of thinking about what the cover should be. Thurston just said, "How about this?" and we were like "Yeah, that's cool. Okay, we're done." ■

Radio



Who is that new guy on WHPK, alternating even Mondays at 3 pm., the guy with that deep, melodic voice who talks about law, and makes it sound interesting? Wait... it actually is interesting, and so is the host.

He is Roosevelt University Legal Studies Professor Michael Sweig, host of WHPK's newest public affairs show, "IN JUDGMENT: Comments on Law and Culture."

I asked "Professor Michael" a few questions, the answers to which might surprise our readers.

A: Why is the show called "In Judgment" and what exactly are you judging?

A: I like the First Amendment and I like to say what I think. Liking to hear oneself talk doesn't hurt any, either if you have a radio show. I suppose. But really, throughout my legal career and in the last ten years as a legal studies professor, I've seen law as a stage with varying degrees of high and low drama. Legal problems and disputes tell stories about culture. Hence the full name of the show: IN JUDGMENT: Comments on Law and Culture. The show is not just about law. I'm more interested in what we can learn about life from law than what we can learn about law from life. The legal significance of court cases is fine. I want to know what it all means for the layman, and that's what I talk about on my show. ■

Directions... continued from page 9

dismissive of the social sciences. I say there's no reason to be dismissive of the social sciences, there should not be this antagonism. With respect to biology in particular, there has to be an increased emphasis in mechanisms to ameliorate the teleological tendencies of the "why" biology approach.

CL: I'm curious, how did you become interested in this whole issue of sociobiology and its limitations?

RF: Oh, it's from the time I was in graduate school. I became disenchanted with this sort of explanatory style. And, my interest in sex differences and sexual phenomena has been the focus of my research over the years. So, I combine those two here.

CL: Maybe as a final note, in what fields do you think the greatest advances will come in terms of trying to understand behavior?

RF: Well, I certainly think biology will certainly make a big contribution, neurobiology will make a contribution, and evolutionary biology rightly construed will make a contribution. One of the problems with evolutionary psychology is that it's going to discredit any evolutionary approach because it's so obviously defective. And, the social sciences are obviously going to play an important role: anthropology, sociology, and psychology.

CL: So, a combination of all of these.

RF: Exactly...there's not going to be any simplistic explanations for complex human behaviors. ■

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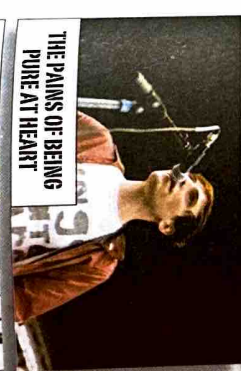
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09

Welcome to this week's installment of

What Ladies Want

BY MOIRA CASSIDY

